

**TESTIMONY OF THE
DISTRICT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**Automated Traffic Enforcement Amendment Act of 2005
Bill 16-54.**



**Testimony of Dan Tangherlini
Director**

**Anthony A. Williams
Mayor**

**Committee on Public Works and the Environment
Carol Schwartz, Chairperson**

**Wednesday, June 15, 2005
12, noon
Council Chambers
Washington, DC**

Good day, Chairperson Schwartz, Councilmembers and staff. I am Dan Tangherlini, Director of the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) and I am pleased to present DDOT's testimony for this hearing on the Automated Traffic Enforcement Act of 2005.

Traffic safety in our city is based on the three's E's Education, Engineering, and Enforcement. These roles are handled by several entities in our government, including the Metropolitan Police Department with DDOT and other agencies. DDOT applauds MPD's decision to reestablish the Traffic Control Division combining the various traffic enforcement functions. Each of us had been coordinating this work with each other in various ways. DDOT and MPD have been happy with the program but we agree that transportation enhancements would improve the program. DDOT has been working with MPD and begun to accomplish many of the items.

To that end, in cooperation with MPD and Maryland and Virginia agencies, DDOT is participating in the 2005 Street Smart Campaign, a regional media and enforcement effort to reduce pedestrian and cyclist injuries. Street Smart is focused on increasing driver awareness of pedestrians and bicyclists and on pedestrians being sensitive and responsive to traffic rules and conditions. The program will emphasize compliance with the District's new law requiring a complete stop for pedestrians in a crosswalk without traffic signals, rather than simply yielding. High-risk pedestrian and bicyclist violations, such as crossing against pedestrian signals, disrupting the flow of traffic and failing to follow traffic rules, will be targeted.

To formalize the on-going working relationship between the various agencies involved with traffic safety, we are re-establishing and reconstituting the D.C. Transportation Safety Coordinating Committee. The Committee will ensure cross-coordination between the various DC government agencies responsible for transportation safety including MPD, the Departments Public Works and Motor Vehicles, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority and DDOT. The

committee will look at all the different elements of traffic safety including the appropriate determination of speed limits and the effectiveness of enforcement.

DDOT is currently developing a program for automated enforcement locations. The program includes guidelines and process elements to comprehensively address how and where sites are located. It goes further to establish standards and methods, focusing on evaluating the effectiveness of automated enforcement locations in meeting traffic safety program goals. This process includes pre- and post-installation analysis of speed zones selected for automated enforcement. This approach is good engineering practice and is consistent with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's best practices. DDOT has agreed with MPD to proceed with this approach to analyzing the automated enforcement zones whether this legislation is successful or not.

As you may be aware, the DDOT has initiated a comprehensive evaluation of the speed limits in the District of Columbia for federal-aid roads, principal arterials and the freeway and expressway system. The study will analyze design criteria, traffic signalization, traffic volume, access points, design speed, crash history and adjacent land use, including school zones and playgrounds. Data will be collected to provide a complete statistical analysis of the prevailing travel speed as it relates to posted speed limits and roadway design. No other major urban area that we know of is doing such a comprehensive review of its speed limits. This study will provide us the necessary data to make adjustments to District speed limits

The Administration and DDOT are concerned with the legislation's proposal to dedicate automated enforcement revenue to the Highway Trust Fund. We do not think, as a matter of good public policy, that programs should be structured to be dependent on enforcement revenue. Enforcement revenue should be declining if enforcement is effective.

In addition, citizens can become suspicious of programs that “benefit” from fines.

Adherence to the traffic rules and regulations means a safer transportation system for all users, pedestrians, bikes and vehicles.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

I am pleased to answer any questions you may have.